

SEASONAL DEPRESSION & HOW TO TREAT IT

What is Seasonal Depression?

- Seasonal depression is defined as a depressive disorder that is prevalent in cooler, darker fall and winter months that typically goes into remission in the spring months (Wirz-Justice et al., 2019).
- Those in higher latitude locations and women are more likely to develop symptoms (Sigmon et al., 2007). People ages 60+ are also at a higher risk due to their lack of technology to help them connect with people (Latikka et al., 2021).
- Symptoms can include intense feelings of sadness or anxiousness, lost interest in typical activities, intense cravings of carbohydrates, weight-gain, trouble concentrating, and more time spent sleeping (Kopochinski, 2022).

Social Interaction

- The desire to socialize can tend to decline during times of depression.
- Lower temperatures can affect different parts of the brain which can make people less interested in social situations (Davis et al., 2007).
- By increasing, or simply continuing regular social contact during colder months, symptoms of this disorder can be reduced mildly, or even completely, in some cases.

Acknowledgement

- Those who acknowledge they have symptoms relating to seasonal depression during colder months have noticed decreased symptoms.
- Realize as fall and winter months begin to get closer that your symptoms may come back.
- Communicate with those around you to understand what causes your symptoms (Rohan et al., 2019).

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

- CBT is a combination of cognitive and behavior therapy.
 - Cognitive therapy: allows patients to see what their symptoms result from.
 - Behavior therapy: helps disconnect the response from what triggers the response.
- Allows patients to see why fall and winter months can trigger symptoms related to seasonal depression and how to respond to them (Davis et al., 2007).

You are not alone. Over 10 million Americans combat seasonal depression each year.